

# MISSIONARY ITINERATING:

## REVISED VERSION

*Ed Kilbourne/Korea*

*Group of islands from which young people came to Conference.*

The rapid whap-whap-whap of deeply pitched rotor blades suspended the helicopter just inches above the landing pad, then set her down as tenderly as if on a crate of eggs. A smiling young Korean Air Force Major jumped from the craft.

"Sorry we're late!" he yelled above the roar. "Engine trouble held us up!" With these encouraging words, he helped us into the plane, fitted us with head-gear, plugged in our inter-com system, and with a thumbs-up signal to the pilot indicated in universal sign language, "Everything's OK — let's go!" We lifted clear, held for a moment, then tail-high and nose-down, like a bull readying for a charge, our ungainly monster was under way.

Thus we began a missionary journey, travelling by the most modern methods to one of Korea's most primitive and neglected areas — her coastal islands. We were to attend a summer Youth Conference in which Christian young people from O.M.S. churches on 17 islands were participating. This is an annual affair and the most important event in their year. The trip by car and boat would have taken most of the day. This one took us forty-five minutes.

No south sea setting is more beautiful than this necklace-like cluster of islands off Korea's west coast. Though pounded by storms from the sea-ward side, the inland lagoons were placid and crystal clear, and brilliant white beaches curved between rugged rock formations. This wealth of beauty, however, is not symbolic of prosperity. These inland people are incredibly poor. Rocks and sand make farming barely productive, and therefore subsistence is often at starvation level. Through World Relief Commission the O.M.S. has supplied tons of food to hungry islanders.

The west coast of Korea has some of the world's highest tides — often running as high as thirty feet. Our helicopter arrives at a pre-calculated low-tide period and we were able to land in a then — dry sand basin, just a couple of hundred yards from the church. This wasn't the case a few hours later when we were to leave.

We were warmly greeted by the headman or "mayor" of this island chain, and it was in his home that we were first formally welcomed and honored before going into the day's meetings. Although apologizing for the poverty of his people the mayor spoke with deep pride of his islands and described them each one in a way that made you know that he would choose no where else to live. One of the islands he pointed out in the distance was entirely rock-bound. The people living there were attracted only by the fishing, for farming was impossible. When an inhabitant died he could not be buried in the solid rock. The body was simply laid above ground and

rocks heaped over it. The island is covered with rock mounds.

It was interesting that the Christian young people from this particular island won most of the prizes during the Conference — for attendance, Scripture memorization, for the best sermon, and for the athletic events. The difficulties of life strangely seemed to draw the best from these youngsters.

Our service with this throng of eager, appreciative youth was a very moving experience. Their testimonies were living and vital. Their concern for the salvation of their island people was deep and abiding. God is at work in this great and desperately needy field of island evangelism.

Departure time was announced by the distant drone of our returning helicopter. The tide had pressed, like crawling fingers, into every empty lagoon, and once-dry boats were now afloat. Finally a rise of sand dune — half a mile away — was sighted and the "whirly-bird" carefully set down. The entire village, along with the Conference young folk, walked with us out to the plane. A chorus of farewell shouts, a flurry of waving hands, and once again we were air-borne. Taking a wide sweep of the islands, we circled our people for a final good-bye, then headed for the sea and a distant horizon.

Settling back in my seat, I reflected on the day's experience, and seeing the islands already fading in the distance, I bemusedly asked myself the question, "Well — I wonder what the Apostle Paul would have thought of this?"



*Village on island where Youth Conference was held.*

## MANY HANDS . . .

Have been trained to lay brick, saw lumber, keep books, tile floors, wire houses, and till soil.

## HOWEVER,

## MISSIONARY HANDS . . .

Must wield the hammer, mix the mortar, handle the accounts and raise the crops for establishing footholds for Christ in heathen lands.



*Can it be that God intended ministers and doctors to go across the globe and spend years in manual labor and business administration for which they have never been schooled — or are there other "harvest hands" that should and could lend technical skills so the preaching, teaching, and medical ministries will no longer be delayed?*

### "What is that in thine hand?" Exodus 4:2

*Carpenters, plumbers, electricians, builders, etc., are needed on short term basis on several mission fields.*

*Men, are your vocation and vacation at God's disposal?*

*Business Managers are urgently needed for full time service in many foreign offices.*

**"The slothful man hideth his hand in his bosom." Proverbs 19:24**

# men for missions, int.

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